



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/750,948	12/28/2000	Perry G. Vincent	23689-210	7545
26890	7590	07/14/2005	EXAMINER	
JAMES M. STOVER NCR CORPORATION 1700 SOUTH PATTERSON BLVD, WHQ4 DAYTON, OH 45479			MEINECKE DIAZ, SUSANNA M	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3623	

DATE MAILED: 07/14/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/750,948

Applicant(s)

VINCENT, PERRY G.

Examiner

Susanna M. Diaz

Art Unit

3623

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 April 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 4-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 4-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

A

DETAILED ACTION

1. In view of the Applicant's persuasive arguments presented in the Appeal Brief filed on April 26, 2005, PROSECUTION IS HEREBY REOPENED. A new art rejection is set forth below.

To avoid abandonment of the application, appellant must exercise one of the following two options:

(1) file a reply under 37 CFR 1.111 (if this Office action is non-final) or a reply under 37 CFR 1.113 (if this Office action is final); or,

(2) request reinstatement of the appeal.

If reinstatement of the appeal is requested, such request must be accompanied by a supplemental appeal brief, but no new amendments, affidavits (37 CFR 1.130, 1.131 or 1.132) or other evidence are permitted. See 37 CFR 1.193(b)(2).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1, 4-6, and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Net Perceptions for Call Centers, as disclosed in "Net Perceptions Alters Dynamics of Marketing Industry with Introduction of Net Perceptions for Call Centers."

Net Perceptions discloses a method of suggesting an interaction strategy to a customer service representative in a customer relationship management environment, said method comprising the steps of:

[Claim 1] maintaining an interaction repository containing customer data (¶¶ 2-4);

utilizing one or more data analysis tools comprising executable instructions to analyze said customer data to determine one or more patterns and generate a set of rules based upon said patterns (¶¶ 2-4); and

using a recommendation engine to apply said rules to a current customer interaction to recognize one or more of said patterns in said interaction and suggest an interaction strategy corresponding to said recognized patterns (¶¶ 2-4);

[Claim 4] wherein said recommendation engine recognizes said patterns from said current customer interaction in real-time (¶¶ 2-4);

[Claim 5] wherein said customer data includes a customer interaction history with said business (¶¶ 2-4);

[Claim 6] wherein said patterns are individually determined for customers of said business (¶¶ 2-4);

[Claim 9] wherein said current customer interaction is a telephone contact with a call center representative (¶¶ 2-4).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

Art Unit: 3623

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 7, 8, and 10-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Net Perceptions for Call Centers, as disclosed in "Net Perceptions Alters Dynamics of Marketing Industry with Introduction of Net Perceptions for Call Centers," as applied to claim 1 above, *in view of* Andrews ("A Hidden Agenda").

[Claims 7, 8, 10] While "Net Perceptions Alters Dynamics of Marketing Industry with Introduction of Net Perceptions for Call Centers" does not expressly disclose that the Net Perception for Call Centers recommendation engine captures data from a plurality of different interaction data sources, Andrews teaches that Net Perceptions does offer a recommendation engine that collects and analyzes data regarding customer interactions among various channels, including telephonic (i.e., physical) and online/Web (i.e., a virtual and self-service application) interactions (¶¶ 1, 4). This capability allows merchants to more comprehensively and successfully personalize product offerings made to customers, especially those that interact with the merchants through various channels (¶¶ 1, 4). As a matter of fact, the SkyMall implementation of Net Perceptions' recommendation engine, as disclosed by Andrews, is embodied in a call center environment (similar to Net Perceptions' packaged product, Net Perceptions for Call Centers); therefore, the Examiner submits that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant's invention to adapt the product Net Perceptions for Call Centers to capture customer data from a plurality of different interaction data sources, including both physical and virtual channels (such as a self-

Art Unit: 3623

service application), in order to reap the full capabilities of Net Perceptions' recommendation engine in the call center environment, thereby allowing merchants to more comprehensively and successfully personalize product offerings made to customers, especially those that interact with the merchants through various channels (as suggested in ¶¶ 1, 4 of Andrews).

[Claims 11-15] Claims 11-15 recite limitations already addressed by the rejection of claims 1 and 4-10 above; therefore, the same rejection applies.

Furthermore, while Net Perceptions for Call Centers displays a prompt to agents with "pertinent customer information and specific purchase recommendations for whoever is on the line" (¶ 4 of "Net Perceptions Alters Dynamics of Marketing Industry with Introduction of Net Perceptions for Call Centers"), "Net Perceptions Alters Dynamics of Marketing Industry with Introduction of Net Perceptions for Call Centers" does not expressly teach all of the details of Net Perceptions for Call Centers' user interface. For example, there is no express teaching that the user interface allows for inputting of data regarding said current interaction (claim 12) or a separate display panel for inputting notes that are used to determine recommendation strategies (claims 13 and 14); however, "Net Perceptions Alters Dynamics of Marketing Industry with Introduction of Net Perceptions for Call Centers" states that Net Perceptions for Call Centers pools "information from current and previous calls...As each inbound or outbound customer call proceeds, Net Perceptions for Call Centers prompts agents with pertinent customer information and specific purchase recommendations for whoever is

Art Unit: 3623

on the line.” (§ 4) The fact that prompts are displayed to agents throughout the progression of the call (i.e., “Net Perceptions for Call Centers continuously builds customer profiles as each call progresses and uses the information to prompt agents with purchase recommendations that are unique to each customer,” § 2) implies that some interaction between the agent and the system occurs. In order to continuously build customer profiles during the call progression, input regarding the call interactions must somehow be documented. The Examiner submits that it is old and well-known in the art of call centers to provide call center agents with a display window at which he/she may enter specific details in reference to each call. For example, if a customer calls requesting information on a particular book, the agent may enter this information into the system. Net Perceptions for Call Centers needs some basic background information on each call in order to more effectively generate purchase recommendations. Since the call center agent directly deals with the customer, the Examiner submits that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of Applicant’s invention to adapt Net Perceptions for Call Centers to provide the agent with a user interface for inputting of data regarding said current interaction (claim 12), including a separate display panel for inputting notes that are used to determine recommendation strategies (claims 13 and 14) in order to more effectively generate purchase recommendations based on the real-time progression of each call (as suggested by the fact that “Net Perceptions for Call Centers continuously builds customer profiles as each call progresses and uses the information to prompt agents with purchase recommendations that are unique to each customer,” § 2). Since the

Art Unit: 3623

agent has the most direct contact with the customer during his/her communications with the call center, the Examiner submits that the agent has insight into some of the most valuable information regarding the customer's current needs, thereby making such perceptions entered by the agent crucial for a more efficient and successful marketing strategy.

[Claims 16-20] Claims 16-20 recite limitations already addressed by the rejection of claims 1 and 4-10 above; therefore, the same rejection applies. It should be noted that, by comparing a current customer to "other customers with similar buying patterns" (§ 4 of "Net Perceptions Alters Dynamics of Marketing Industry with Introduction of Net Perceptions for Call Centers"), one is detecting affinities to patterns. Since customer purchase histories, data from both current and previous calls, and data related to other customers with similar buying patterns are used to make a recommendation to a current customer (§§ 3-4 of "Net Perceptions Alters Dynamics of Marketing Industry with Introduction of Net Perceptions for Call Centers"), it is understood that the patterns may include customer product ownership, customer interaction history, customer interaction behavior, and product affinities.

Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Bieganski et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,412,012) -- Discloses a call center recommendation system assigned to Net Perceptions, Inc.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Susanna M. Diaz whose telephone number is (571) 272-6733. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 10 am - 6 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on (571) 272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Susanna M. Diaz
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3623

July 11, 2005